

## REMARKS/ARGUMENT

### Description of Amendments

In this Amendment, claims 1, 11, and 14 has been amended. Claims 1, 2, and 4-16 are pending after entry of this Amendment. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is requested.

No new matter is introduced by this Amendment. Currently amended claims 1 and 14 are supported at least by claim 3 (now canceled) of the originally-filed specification.

For convenience, the paragraph numbers below correspond to the paragraph numbers of the Office Action of April 19, 2007

### Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

#### (1)

Claims 1, 3, 5, 11, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 5,628,786 ("Banas"). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claim 1 was amended to recite: "rotating the stent ... during the application of the vacuumed pressure." Banas fails to teach this limitation. Banas discloses a graft member 20 that is mounted on a rotatable mandrel 22, which allows the graft member to be coated with reinforcing material in a dipping tank 24 (see Figures 3 and 4 and col. 8, lines 35-58). After coating, the reinforcing material is cured on the outer wall surface 13 of the graft member 20. Banas discloses that prior to curing, the fluid coating may be driven into the graft member 20 "by drawing a negative pressure from the central lumen 14 of the tubular graft member 20" (col. 8, lines 54-58). However, there is no disclosure in Banas of drawing the negative pressure contemporaneously with rotating the graft member. Figure 4 shows the rotatable mandrel 22 as a solid structure and provides no suggestion that negative pressure is drawn from the central lumen of the graft member while mounted on the mandrel. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 3 is patentably allowable over Banas.

The Examiner cited Figures 6 and 7 and col. 10 line 44 to col. 11 line 5 of Banas. However, these portions of Banas disclose a mold block member 82 in which "a graft member 60 is mounted onto the vacuum mandrel 52" and in which reinforcing material flows

into the mold and “is drawn into the microporous e-PTFE matrix of the tubular graft member 60” (col. 11, lines 12-23). Significantly, Banas does not teach rotating the vacuum mandrel 52 or the graft member 60 on the vacuum mandrel. Banas provides no teaching or suggestion of how such rotation might even be accomplished inside the mold block member 82.

Additionally, claim 1 recites “inserting a stent over a mandrel” and the Examiner states Banas “teach a method of coating a stent comprising inserting a stent over a mandrel (Figures 6 and 7; col. 10, line 44 to col. 11 line 5).” Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner. Banas discloses a microporous PTFE graft member that is “mounted onto a radially expandable endoluminal stent or alone onto an expansion balloon for intraluminal delivery and radial expansion” (col. 1, lines 15-20). Banas explains that “stents may be covered by co-axially disposing a tubular PTFE vascular graft over an endovascular stent.” (col. 1, lines 47-49). As such, the stent of the claimed invention and the graft member of Banas are patentably distinct from each other. In the portions of Banas cited by the Examiner (Figures 6 and 7 and in col. 10 line 44 to col. 11 line 5), Banas discloses a mold block member 82 in which “a graft member 60 [not a stent] is mounted onto the vacuum mandrel 52” and in which reinforcing material flows into the mold and “is drawn into the microporous e-PTFE matrix of the tubular graft member 60” (col. 11, lines 12-23). The reinforcing material allows the graft member to resist axial foreshortening upon radial expansion. However, there is no disclosure in Banas of inserting a stent, as opposed to a graft, over a mandrel, as required by claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentably allowable over Banas.

Independent claim 11 recites “performing the following acts contemporaneously: applying a coating substance..., rotating the stent..., applying a pressure into the hollow body.” Banas fails to disclose this limitation. There is no disclosure in Banas of applying pressure contemporaneously with rotating the graft member. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is patentably allowable over Banas.

Additionally, independent claim 11 recites: “mounting a stent on or over a hollow body” and “applying a pressure into the hollow body to modify the coating substance that is being applied to the stent.” Banas also fails to disclose these limitations. As mentioned above, Banas discloses placing a graft member, not a stent, on a vacuum mandrel. For this additional reason, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is patentably allowable over Banas.

Claims 3 has been canceled, making its rejection moot.

Claims 5 and 12 depend from claims 1 and 11, respectively. As indicated above, claims 1 and 11 are patentably allowable over Banas. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 5 and 12 are patentably allowable over Banas for at least the same reasons as claim 1 and 11, respectively.

(2)

Claims 1, 4, and 5-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over US 6,521,284 ("Parsons").

Claim 1 was amended to recite: "rotating the stent ... during the application of the vacuumed pressure." Parsons fails to teach this limitation. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentably allowable over Parsons.

Claims 4 and 5-10 depend from claim 1 and are patentably allowable for the same reason as claim 1.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

(3)

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Banas. As indicated above, claim 1 is patentably allowable over Banas. Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and, therefore, claim 2 is patentably allowable over Banas for at least the same reason as claim 1.

(4)

Claims 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,214,115 ("Taylor") in view of US 7,105,198 ("Sundar").

Claim 14 was amended to recite: "the application of the pressure is conducted contemporaneously with rotating the stent." Taylor and Sundar, individually and in combination, fail to teach this limitation. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 14 is patentably allowable over Taylor in view of Sundar.

Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 14 and are patentably allowable for at least the same reason as claim 14.

(5)

Claims 2, 11, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Parsons in view of US 6,676,987 ("Zhong").

As indicated above, claim 1 is patentably allowable over Parsons. Zhong fails to cure the deficiency of Parsons in respect of claim 1, so claim 1 is patentably allowable over Parsons in view of Zhong. Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and is patentably allowable over Parsons in view of Zhong for at least the same reason as claim 1.

Independent claim 11 recites: "performing the following acts contemporaneously: applying a coating substance..., rotating the stent..., applying a pressure into the hollow body." The Examiner stated that Parsons fails to teach rotating the stent while applying a coating composition thereto. Applicant points out that Parsons also fails to teach rotating the stent while applying a pressure into a hollow body on or over which the stent is mounted.

Parsons, which is concerned with drawing a coating substance into the pores of a porous material 6 using a vacuum method, fails to teach rotating a stent. Zhong teaches rotating a stent while a coating is sprayed onto one area of the stent at a time. However, there is no motivation to modify the method of Parsons such that the porous material 6 is rotated while applying a vacuum to the porous material, because doing would result in non-uniform impregnation of the porous material. That is, as coating is applied to a first portion of the porous material, the vacuum immediately begins to draw the coating into the first portion. As the porous material 6 is rotated and coating is applied to a second portion of the porous material, the coating on the first portion is drawn deeper into the porous material than the coating on the second portion. This variation in impregnation occurs because the coating on the first portion has been exposed to the vacuum for a longer period of time than the coating on the second portion. Thus, the Examiner's proposed modification of the impregnation method of Parsons would render the method unsuitable for its intended purpose of improving control of the "the degree, uniformity, and placement of an impregnating composition within the pores of a porous material" (see Parsons, col. 2, lines 10-20). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is patentably allowable over Parsons in view of Zhong.

Claim 13 depends from claim 11 and is patentably allowable over Parsons in view of Zhong for at least the same reason as claim 11.


Conclusion

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 13, 2007

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